

The Brethren Evangelist,

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A. D. GNAGEY, : : Editor.

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A NEW CHURCH MILITANT.

For some years the Rev. Dr. John Rush, Pastor of the Fullerton Avenue Presbyterian church, Chicago, Ill., has been fighting the social evils of the day, somewhat to the discomfort of his people. Dr. Rush found the restraints of an ordinary charge, a hindrance to his work, he felt himself too much circumscribed and cramped by a too conservative people. Accordingly, the Dr. resigned about two months ago, that he might be free to prosecute his work of reform among the people of Chicago.

On October 6, with the aid of others, a new religious organization was formed to be known as "The Militant Church." The meetings will be held in Willard Hall, the auditorium of the Woman's Temple, located in the heart of the city, where Sunday loungers and the ooze of the slums may be reached. The object of the new organization is to fight the great social evils in the city. The Dr. has the co-operation and sympathy of such men as Dr. Carlos Martyn, Dr. W. R. Scarritt, Rev. H. W. Carwandine, Rev. George C. Moore, and many others. A corps of physicians will conduct a free dispensary, and treat indignant patients; a club of young lawyers, to see that the poor receive justice at the hands of the court, a cooking school for girls and women, a gold cure institute for drunkards, and a social club for newsboys and boot-blacks, are some of the more prominent features of the organization.

Now, the question that puzzles us is, why a minister must resign his pastorate in order to engage in a work so eminently in harmony with the principles of our holy religion, and the teachings of Him who came to give peace and good will to men.

Why should not this organization exist as a branch or department of church work, and the pastor continue his labors with the church, organizing their forces for the accomplishment of his object? It seems to us a mistake that such an organization should go *outside* the church, for, unquestionably the motive that prompts men to such service, is born of Christian-

ity, and why should Christianity be robbed of that credit which so justly belongs to it? Why should not a minister, with the aid of his people, be better equipped to fight the devil, *in* the church than out of it?

And yet this question is not so puzzling after all. Church members are very largely to blame for this action on the part of a minister. In almost every church organization there is a certain amount of support which comes from members who are *moral cowards*, and in too many cases the minister is compelled to fight evil at a long range, and with "gloves on." There are too many people in our churches who are *afraid* to take a firm and decided stand on the great moral and social issues of the day. When the minister attacks some of the deep seated social evils of the day, and throws Gospel "shot and shell," at the popular "left hand and right hand," sinning he indirectly strikes a blow at the pocket-book of some of his members, and there is a disturbance. When the Gospel battery, with its God given power, is turned on the saloon, many a one is heard to scream, "My swine, Oh, my swine." The minister may denounce the saloon, but not say too much about the character of the saloon keeper, and especially not against the men who make the laws that put him there. He is handicapped in his denunciations of the social evils, which in a degenerate day, men call "good." "Woe unto that man that calleth evil good, and good evil." Self interest is at the root of it, and so long as the minister denounces the sins of the people across the mountains, the waters are not troubled. Many a minister is practically driven out of his church, because his bold stand on the side of right and purity, disturbs the peace and conscience of certain members who have an interest in a business that is a curse to the church and humanity, and a dishonor to God. Let every lover of virtue and purity and justice, stand by the minister, aid, comfort, encourage and support him in his warfare against wickedness in high places, and if there are any disgruntled, half-hearted professors, who find their idols thrown down, their hopes and political ambition and aspirations blasted—if there are any such, let them get out of the church into the world, where they belong, but you who love the cause of the Master, and lament the prevalence of sin, you, who feel an interest in the cause of humanity, *stand by your pastor*, and hold up his hands. Let the

cowards drop out, if they will; Gideon can do more with 300 faithful, consecrated men, than with 32000, half-hearted, careless cowards. Better have 100 men and women on whom you can depend in every emergency, who are not afraid to go out in battle for the Lord, against sin and the devil, than 300, who are as much interested in Satan's success as they are in the Lord's work. Brethren, be *men*, *true men*, not half-hearted cowards, but *MEN*—such as are afraid to do wrong, and bold to do the right if the heavens fall.

A NEW CHURCH ORGANIZED.

A card from J. C. Mackey, Meyersdale, Pa., informs us that a Brethren church has been organized at Salisbury, with twenty-five members, and good prospects for more. Few of our readers are able to realize what this means to the Brethren church, as they are not acquainted with the circumstances.

Salisbury is a town of from 800 to 1000 inhabitants, six miles distant from Meyersdale, and has been one of the strong holds of the Dunkard church for many years. Here is the home of one of the wealthiest German Baptist churches in western Pennsylvania, perhaps it would be safe to say *the* wealthiest. The membership is composed of an excellent class of people influential at home and abroad. As an historic place in the German Baptist church Salisbury ranks next to Meyersdale and Berlin. It is one of the old strong holds of the church. For some years, however, owing to the very advanced and progressive views of these people, they have been somewhat out of harmony with the workings of the general church, and the activities of this church have been along the line of independence. We are pleased to learn that a Brethren church has been organized at this place, as we know it to be an excellent opening for the Gospel alone doctrine. We congratulate Brother Mackey upon his success in effecting this organization, for we hope to see great results from it. There is no reason why the Brethren should not have a flourishing church at Salisbury. The material is there—just such material out of which Brethren churches are built. The people are intelligent, wide awake and ready for every good work. They have been waiting for some one to direct their latent energies into channels of larger usefulness and Christian activities. Brother Mackey is a faithful servant of the Master; he presents the word in its